



STATE OF IOWA

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DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
Gary D. Maynard, Director

DATE: March 8, 2004

TO: Beth Lenstra

FROM: Mary A. Benning

SUBJECT: Questions from Justice Systems Appropriations Subcommittee

The following response pertain a question asked of the Department of Corrections during the presentation to the Appropriations Subcommittee for Justice Systems.

Question: Is there a possibility of drawing Medicaid funds for inmates housed at U of I hospitals and clinics, without statutory changes?

Answer: The Department of Corrections has consulted the following sources to provide a thorough response: Eugene Gessow, Department of Human Services point of contact for Medicaid issues; Maximus study on state use of medicaid funds; relevant IDOC staff.

Traditionally, the Iowa Department of Corrections has been informed that there does not exist any possibility for an offender to draw any Medicaid funding while in custody, including while housed at the University of Iowa. However, according to Human Services and the Maximus study, there may now be a narrow window of opportunity that has been recently opened for offenders to draw Medicaid funds while incarcerated, without Iowa statutory changes. This ability to draw funds is limited to offenders who would otherwise qualify for Medicaid coverage apart from their offender status. This would only cover offenders who are 65 years of age or older or who would have a condition making them eligible for disability status. This ability to draw funds is also limited only to the period of time the offender spends in an outside hospital only. Any medical coverage provided to the offender within the confines of the prison or other correctional setting would not be covered by Medicaid, regardless of the age of condition of the offender, including follow-up care or medications. In light of this information, the Department of Corrections is willing to explore the possibility of claiming Medicaid coverage for offenders falling into these circumstances.

The mission of the Iowa Department of Corrections is to:
Protect the Public, the Employees, and the Offenders